Classroom Observation

At 9:30am, John was observed by the evaluation specialist during Ms. Smith’s Language Arts instruction on Tuesday, May 12, 2014. Nineteen students and the teacher were present. First, the students completed a proofreading exercise projected on the Smart Board. Next, they completed a page in their language arts workbooks. John then transitioned to the paired work activity with a male classmate sitting next to him. The students were instructed to collaboratively write a paragraph with five identified grammatical errors. The pairs were then to swap their paragraphs and identify five grammatical errors in the swapped papers. John intently wrote for the entire 15 minutes of allotted time. When instructed, John and his partner passed one of the papers to another group.

Upon completion of this activity, the teacher asked for volunteers to discuss the corrections made on their class activity. John’s partner raised his hand and volunteered their five found errors. John looked up, made eye contact with the teacher, and nodded in agreement with his partner. He then returned to writing on his paper. Upon completion of this observation, the teacher was asked if John’s performance and behavior was typical. Ms. Smith reported that John’s behavior today was not typical. His compliance, lack of physical activity, quiet temperament, and seeming attention to the task were not typical of his daily performance and behaviors. The evaluation specialist reviewed the paper that John was working on during the class and noticed that it was not related to the class activity. It was a very candid and clear love letter to another student.

What elements of a classroom observation are present and what are missing?

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| Present? ✓ | Classroom observation element |
|  | Date observed |
|  | Class observed (area of concern) |
|  | Time of day |
|  | Number of students in class |
|  | What was the student required to do in the class (task and expectations) |
|  | What was his/her work product (correct answer?) |
|  | Describe any demonstrated behaviors relevant to the purported academic deficit area. If you note some specific characteristics (e.g. latency, frequency of certain behaviors ) then time and/or count |
|  | Upon completion of the observation, you should: ask teacher if performance and behavior observed are typical for this student, review the work sample or product, if there is one, ask teacher if this is similar to other students |